



State of Washington

DEPARTMENT OF FISH AND WILDLIFE

Mailing Address: 600 Capitol Way N - Olympia, Washington 98501-1091 - (360) 902-2200, TDD (360) 902-2207
Main Office location: Natural Resources Building - 1111 Washington Street SE - Olympia, WA

ADDENDUM 14-076 TO DETERMINATION OF NONSIGNIFICANCE 10-001 DATED: JANUARY 11, 2010

Name of DNS: 10-001 METHOW WILDLIFE AREA BEAR CREEK FOREST HABITAT RESTORATION

Description of Proposal: The proposal will:

- Use hand felling to reduce the density of small diameter Ponderosa Pine stands from their current 400 to 1,500 trees per acre to 30 to 50 trees per acre. Stand reconstruction sampling indicates that historic Ponderosa Pine density in the project area was approximately 11 to 30 trees per acre. At present there are essentially 2 cohorts of Ponderosa Pine trees, pre (> 125 yrs., i.e. old growth) and post fire suppression (most 70 to 90 yrs). We will retain 100% of the pre-fire suppression trees and snags, and enough of the largest and most likely to survive of the post-fire suppression trees to meet our target density, including snags. Our sampling indicates that 25% to as high as 42% of the trees in these stands are dead as a result of Pine Beetle attacks and the remainder of the trees, including relic old growth, are at risk of further beetle attacks and catastrophic fire.
- The project will use thinning prescriptions based on the predetermined ecological site potential to reduce hazard from fire and insect damage, and improve wildlife habitat.
- Remove encroaching Ponderosa Pine trees from declining aspen stands (Aspen stands have been designated a priority habitat by the WDFW). Will improve vigor of remnant aspen trees and favor recovering aspen stands to their pre-fire suppression era extent.
- The project area is approximately 80 acres in 2 sections.
- Thinning slash will be piled in approximately 4'x4'x4' piles and burned in the late fall following harvest.
- Incorporate thermal cover and hiding patches for wildlife into prescriptions and create additional snags for cavity nesters.
- All trees will be felled by hand and skidded with a tracked cable skidder.
- To the greatest degree possible operations will be conducted on frozen ground with a snow pack of at least 12" to minimize soil compaction and surface disturbance.
- No new road construction, but some closed/abandoned roads will be temporarily re-opened.
- In conjunction with USFS, WDNR, Okanogan Fire District 6 and other agencies, conduct controlled broadcast burns to reduce fire hazard and improve regeneration of fire dependent species for browse. Burns would only be conducted if sufficient additional resources are available from the above mentioned agencies or outside funding sources
- Controlled burns would be contained by various control lines including hand-lines and existing roads and ignited by hand.
- Plant native grasses and shrubs in areas impacted by the project to reduce encroaching weeds.
- Monitor and evaluate progress and effectiveness of treatments with photo-monitoring and vegetative cover/density plots.
- Use signs and guided field trips to illustrate sustainable environmental benefits to the

public.

Approximately 170 acres of the project area were burned in the July, 2014 Carlton Complex Wildfire. In consideration of wildfire effects, the project has been modified within burned areas as follows:

- Where possible more live trees will be retained to ensure that long term trees retention rates are met despite anticipated post-fire tree mortality. Where inadequate live trees are present, snags will be retained in their place at the desired retention rate. These approaches will result in more snags than initially planned.
- Hazard trees created by the fire will be felled in campgrounds and along roads. Hazard trees cut within riparian buffers will be left on the ground to stabilize soils and improve riparian habitat quality.
- Rather than pile and burn slash, materials will be scattered to increase soil cover, moisture interception and retention, and soil nutrients.

Proponent/Applicant: Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife
Contact: Dale Swedberg or Sherry Furnari
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Dale.Swedberg@dfw.wa.gov; Sherryl.Furnari@dfw.wa.gov

Location of Project or Action: Bear Creek Wildlife Area, Winthrop, Okanogan County, Washington; Section 31 and 32, Township 35 North, Range 22 East WM

Lead Agency: Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife

WDFW is providing updated information on this project which may be of interest to other agencies or the public. The updated information provided below does not substantially change the analysis of significant impacts in the existing environmental checklist.

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Based on the original DNS and the updated information provided in this addendum, we have determined that a new threshold determination is not warranted. There is no comment period associated with this SEPA environmental checklist addendum.

Responsible Official: Lisa Wood

Position/Title: SEPA/NEPA Coordinator, WDFW Regulatory Services Section

Address: 600 Capitol Way North, Olympia, WA 98501-1091

If you have questions about this action, contact Lisa Wood at the address above,
SEPADesk2@dfw.wa.gov, phone (360) 902-2260, or fax (360) 902-2946.

DATE OF ISSUE: October 22, 2014

SIGNATURE:

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Lisa Wood". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

SEPA Log Number: 14-076add (Bear Creek Forest Hab Restn DNS 10-001)